

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

RSR-01 /093 W

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R 041420 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0250

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 03931

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, UK

SUBJECT: LABOR PARTY APOSTATE TO TAKE SEAT IN
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

1. DICK TAVERNE, THE FORMER LABOR MP WHO WAS RE-ELECTED AS AN INDEPENDENT AT THE LINCOLN BY- ELECTION MARCH 1, WILL TAKE ONE OF THE VACANT SEATS IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT THAT HAD BEEN SET ASIDE FOR THE BRITISH LABOR PARTY. THE GOVERNMENT MOTION APPOINTING TAVERNE WAS APPROVED BY THE HOUSE OF COMMONS AT A VERY LATE AND SPARSELY ATTENDED SESSION APRIL 3. IT PASSED WITHOUT CHALLENGE FROM THE LABOR PARTY.

2. EVEN BEFORE HIS RE- ELECTION, TAVERNE WROTE TO FRANCIS PYM, THE GOVERNMENT'S CHIEF WHIP, EXPRESSING A DESIRE TO BE APPOINTED TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. WITHOUT CLEARING THIS REQUEST WITH ANYONE IN THE
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LABOR PARTY, PYM LET TAVERNE KNOW THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD VIEW HIS APPOINTMENT WITH FAVOR SHOULD HE BE RE-ELECTED. MANY LABOR MPS, INCLUDING PRO-MARKETEERS, WERE AFFRONTED BY PYM'S FAILURE TO CONSULT THEM ABOUT THE DISPOSITION OF ONE OF "THEIR" SEATS. IN THE END, HOWEVER, WILSON DECIDED NOT TO OBJECT AND FORCE A VOTE ON THE GOVERNMENT'S MOTION LEST THE ATTENDANT DEBATE RE-OPEN OLD WOUNDS IN THE LABOR PARTY.

3. DURING A RECENT CONVERSATION WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS, TAVERNE EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD NOT MOVED FASTER TO ENABLE HIM TO GET TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT IN TIME FOR ITS MARCH SESSION. HE HAD PLANNED TO ATTRACT MAXIMUM PUBLICITY BY ARRIVING WITH MANY OF HIS LINCOLN POLITICAL WORKERS IN TOW. AS IT IS, IF HE MAKES HIS DEBUT AT THE APRIL SESSION, HIS WORKERS WILL BE TOO BUSY PREPARING FOR THE FORTHCOMING LOCAL ELECTIONS IN BRITAIN TO ACCOMPANY HIM.

4. TAVERNE CONFIDED TO US THAT HE PLANS TO ATTEND ONLY THREE OR FOUR SESSIONS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DURING THE COMING YEAR. WHILE THERE, HE INTENDS TO EMBARRASS THE LABOR PARTY, AS FORCEFULLY AS POSSIBLE, OVER ITS REFUSAL TO SEND DELEGATES. BEYOND THAT, HOWEVER, HE INDICATED THAT HIS AMBITIOUS PROJECTED SCHEDULE OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY AT HOME WILL PRECLUDE HIS ASSUMING ANY MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT.

SOHM

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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